In the Claims

1-8 (Canceled)

9. (Previously Presented) A shield for preventing arcing from an electrical stud of a portable welding apparatus, the shield comprising a generally inverted U-shaped configuration adapted to at least partially surround the electrical stud, the shield constructed of a non-conductive material, the inverted U-shaped shield having a first planar side having an upper edge, a second planar side extending inwardly from the upper edge of the first planar side and having an inner edge, the second planar side oriented in a plane generally perpendicular to the plane of the first planar side, a third planar side extending from the inner edge of the second planar side, the third planar side oriented in a plane generally parallel to the plane of the first planar side to form the inverted U-shape.

10. (Previously Presented) The shield of claim 9 wherein the non-conductive material is a plastic material and is preformed into the inverted U-shaped configuration.

11. (Currently Amended) The shield of claim 9 wherein the plastic material is ~~MYLAR plastic~~ a biaxially-oriented thermoplastic film and has a thickness of about 10-15 thousandths of an inch.

12–37 (Canceled)

38. (New) The shield of claim 9 wherein the first planar side, the second planar side, and the third planar side are affixed to an internal surface of a welding apparatus housing.

39. (New) The shield of claim 38 wherein at least one of the first planar side, the second planar side, and the third planar side are interfitted with a plurality of ribs on the internal surface of the housing to secure it thereto.

40. (New) The shield of claim 38 wherein the first planar side is positioned intermediate an electrical stud and the welding apparatus housing.

41. (New) The shield of claim 40 wherein the second planar side is positioned horizontally and above the electrical stud.

42. (New) The shield of claim 40 wherein a lower edge of the third planar side is located below the electrical stud.

43. (New) The shield of claim 42 further comprising a lower planar side oriented in a plane generally perpendicular to the third planar side and connected to the lower edge of the third planar side, the lower planar side extending inwardly toward an internal space of the welding apparatus housing.